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CEREMONIES

KAVA DRINKING CEREMONY

Introduction

Kava (Fijian, *yanggona*) is the root of *Piper methysticum*. Though not abundant in Lau, it is drunk there more than in any other part of Fiji. 272 276

The intoxication caused by kava is called *mateni*, meaning death from or illness from. The expression *mate ni yanggona* is also used. To recover is *mbula* (to live). This intoxication dulls the countenance. As I experienced it, it gives a pleasant, warm, and cheerful, but lazy feeling, sociable, though not hilarious or loquacious; the reason is not obscured. In time a certain dullness settles on the company, in which the kava and the late hour probably both have a part. Once after heavy drinking I felt miserable and found it difficult to walk straight; on turning into bed, I felt sick and could not get to sleep. Such intoxication is rare because in Lau the kava is so diluted and served in such small cups that many rounds can be drunk with impunity. Habitual drinkers are said to become intoxicated more quickly than occasional ones. Kava has no unpleasant reaction next morning, other than indolence and lack of appetite. Habitual drinkers can be noted by their watery and bleary eyes, their dull skins, which in bad cases become scaly.

For kava making is used a peculiar bowl (*kumete*), made in Kambara from the reddish wood of the greenheart of India (*vesi*). The shape is roughly that of a very shallow inverted cone. The feet, which are stumpy, are called breasts; most bowls have four, but many large bowls used in ceremonies have ten. Beneath the rim projects a small triangular piece, which is pierced with two holes to insert the coir rope by which the bowl is hung. After much use these bowls become incrusted with a yellow-green deposit that looks like enamel.

The lower parts of coconut shells specially selected for their shape and pointed base form the cups, which are carefully polished inside and out. Most of the Lauan cups are small. In Naitasiri I was presented with a very large one, said to come from Lau, but I have never seen such large ones in use there.

Chewing kava is forbidden by the government and it is never done in Lau. When I first went to Lau, kava was pounded on slabs of stone procured from a hill in Mothe. Many of these stones were selected for the good tone of their ring, and the sound of pounding rang pleasantly through the village at night. A small, smooth stone was used as a pounder and a piece of cloth was spread underneath the slab. In the space of a few months 272 177 276

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the stone was replaced by a wooden mortar, and a short iron bar as pestle. This method, ascribed to some Solomon Islanders, spread from Viti Levu. It was not nearly so picturesque, but more convenient.

The strainer consists of long shreds of the inner bark of the *vau* and is therefore called *i vauvau*.

Tongan Kava Ceremony in Lau

At night the people go round calling, frequently taking with them a parcel of kava, which is placed before the host. The host says in Tongan, "Thanks for the kava" (*fakafeta i mau kawa*). Sometimes Fijian tobacco is brought as "that which is divided with the kava" (*i wase ni yanggona*). The kava brought by the visitor, or some of the host's own, is passed to a young person, usually a girl or young woman, sitting near the lower door, who proceeds to pound it, pausing now and again to listen to the conversation. The elderly people sit in a semicircle in the middle and on the sides, in no particular order, but the chief person is usually at the top facing the door. They sit tailor fashion, and being not so strict as in Tonga, occasionally reverse the position of their legs. The young women make cigarettes with shreds of tobacco leaf, dried against a lantern and rolled within a piece of dried banana leaf, the kind called *pata* being preferred. After taking a few puffs, they bring them to the people in the ring. As spitoons, empty meat tins with a flower or two inside, are distributed. If one of the herald clan is present, he will act as master of ceremonies; if not, one of the lesser noblemen present will do the honors. When the kava has been pounded it is placed in the bowl, behind which a girl sits with her back to the door, while another sits on one side facing the bowl. The bowl is then tilted forward to show to the master of ceremonies with the words, "The kava has been pounded" (*koe kawa nae tuki*). The whole ceremonial is Tongan. The master of ceremonies orders, "knead" (*palu*). The kava is pressed together with the hands sloping forward. The girl who sits on one side pours water on the kava, and the kava maker begins to knead the kava by rolling it backwards and forwards, with the hands sloping forward. Then the strainer is brought, dipped in the water, lifted up and squeezed so that the master of ceremonies may judge whether there is enough water.

He says, "water" (*wai*); or "stop" (*tuku*). The strainer is then placed in a semicircle round the further end of the bowl, drawn towards the operator, like a net, folded, and passed round the edge of the bowl so as to keep the whole surface wet, then wrung over the bowl. When all the water has been squeezed out, the strainer is held in the middle, shaken, and combed with the fingers over a piece of cloth. The strainer is then dipped again and the operation is repeated till the kava is clear. Then the bowl

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is wiped all round the inside; the fiber is formed into a spiral, placed on the palm of the left hand and the right hand is laid upon it; the kava maker makes a sweep over the bowl (I think from left to right) and strikes the fiber with the right palm three or four times, making a hollow sound called *thombo* (like all ceremonial clapping).

The kava maker's assistant then says to the master of ceremonies, "This kava is ready" (*maa ae kava ni*).

To the cup bearer, usually a girl, he answers, "Prepare to receive it" (*tokonaki o fakatau*). The cup bearer then takes a cup and holds it over the bowl; the kava maker dips the fiber into the liquid and squeezes it into a cup.

The assistant sings, "The kava is embarked" (*kava kuo heka*), drawing out the last syllable but one and rising in pitch on the last.

The master of ceremonies calls out, "Bring to So-and-so," naming the most important person present. The person so named generally claps once or twice; the cup bearer brings him a cup and goes to fill another for the next person whose name is called out. Having drained the cup, the drinker spins it forward on the mat to be removed by the cup bearer. When the herald feels so inclined he calls out, "Bring for me" (*mai ma aku*).

After everyone has drunk the dregs (*kota*), kava collected from the first bowl is pounded again. It is used four or five times before being thrown away. In Viti Levu it is used twice, in Samoa once only; in Lau and Tonga it is forbidden to throw away the *kota* after the first time as they do in Samoa, because it is treasured as a chiefly thing. In Tonga should a lowborn man come and carry off the dregs of a nobleman's kava he is clubbed.

At these evening kavas things are done in a free and easy style; the assistant kava maker may also carry the cup round, and some one at the lower end may call out, "The kava is embarked," a cry called *ui*. The precedence is not strict; a herald or a landsman usually drinks next to a nobleman, and alternation described as *rambe*, to kick; this is generally observed for the first nobleman, but cannot be strictly carried out in a random gathering. The order of drinking, too, is changed at every round; if a person has brought kava, one round will be given him as a compliment (*i loloma*) and he will drink first though he may be quite a minor personage. Common as these parties are, some people do not know the ceremonial properly—bushmen who do not listen to the making of kava.

Formal kava ceremonies in Tongan style were held in the open at death-feasts (*i mburua*). When the Tui Naiau is present, he is seated at the top of the circle, and the rope of the kava bowl is stretched towards him. In his absence, Tui Mereke, since he belongs to the oldest generation, will take the place, or failing him, the noble next in rank. The Tui Naiau has a herald

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(*mata mi vanua*) or other elder (*matapule*) on either side. Between the heralds and the bowl on either side sit the titled elders, such as Land Chief, Lord of Tumbou, Envoy to Mbau, Moala. They form the *yalofi*. All the nobles sit "at the back of the *yalofi*," that is, behind the bowl. At the death feast for the present High Chief's little daughter, Semi, the head of the senior branch of Tanggalevu sat on Tui Naiau's left, the Lord of Tumbou being absent; on Tui Naiau's right sat Lemaki, the carpenter; but they exchanged positions because Lemaki did not know all the Tongan words. A little distance from Semi, on the right sat the herald; a lady of Narewandamu; the Land Chief; an old man of Levuka; the chief of the clan of nobles (who should not have been there, they said); Tui Yandrana; Tui Nasangalau; Tui Wathiwathi. On the other side sat Moala and others. A nobleman of Naivi made the kava, a nobleman of Vatuwangga on his right sang out the *ui;* a young man of Naivi was on the left. Behind them sat the other nobles.

For King Edward's death feast, Semi again sat on Tui Naiau's right and called out the orders; the Lord of Tumbou was on the left. The chief of the clan of nobles made the kava, with a nobleman of Vatuwangga on his right, and one of Naivi on his left, each holding a strip of coconut leaf with which to drive away the flies. The great-grandson of the second Tui Naiau and a Tongan who is reckoned among the nobles, were cup bearers.

The following custom may explain how in the first place a nobleman came to be in the *alofi*:

If a nobleman is related on one side to the heralds he will "jump out" into the *alofi*. They accept Tongan names; thus Salesi will call himself Tiakumi, a herald of Haapai, and sit in the *alofi*. He is related to Tiakumi because of Henifanga of Tonga Tapu, of the family of Tui Tonga, because Tui Atehu (viz. *Tui Haateiho*) holds Tungua and Tiakumi is herald there. If Salesi goes to Tonga it is not right for him to sit on the sides, but he will remember some connection with Tumbou proper or Vale Lailai and present himself as Envoy to Mbau or as Lord of Tumbou. The herald will ask him before everybody,

"Why do you sit there?"

"As Tui Tumbou."

"How are you connected with them?"

Salesi explains and if his explanation is accepted he keeps his seat, otherwise he is driven out to the back of the ring. Salesi would not make use of the name of Tiakumi in Tonga because Tiakumi is a herald and a noble at the same time; only in Fiji it is useful to adduce that point because it is a foreign land. Moreover Tiakumi is a very small herald and will sit low down in the ring because the order of heralds is known; in Tonga he would be so near the bowl as to be exposed to making cigarettes and drawing water.

The ring is much preferred, for the nobles at the back are sent to get embers and water, but those in the ring may not be sent on errands, nor may they stretch their legs, but must sit with clasped hands and without changing legs though the kava last till early morning.

It is forbidden to step over the rope stretched towards Tui Naiau. One man who

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did so was fined and sent directly to the store to get a tin of paraffine oil. Tui Yandrana and his men were fined for coming to a mourning kava without mourning mats (*kie*) tied round the waist; they gave a lamp and a looking glass which were immediately estimated by the ladies and valued three pounds. It is the women of the mourning (p. 178) who impose these fines.

The formulae and the method are the same as at informal kava parties, except that women take no active part. Sometimes the kava maker attitudinizes in the manner described by Mariner (10, vol. 2, p. 183), but I have not seen it done. The man who calls out the cups does so in a singing tone, drawing out the syllable *he* much more than at an informal kava. The first cup is not called out (to do so is punishable by a fine), but is taken straight to Tui Naiau; who always drinks first. As the cup is handed to him, fresh water is poured into it; this is called *wai ndroka* and done for no one else. The cup bearer after handing him the cup sits down cross-legged while Tui Naiau drains the cup. The next cup, the "kick" is called and goes to Moala or to Tui Tumbou. These two are called *fati;* it is a custom peculiar to Lakemba, and is not Tongan. Malani, the second Tui Naiau, gave one *fati*, to Moala, a Tongan, for piloting him through a difficult passage. Moala asked as a favor that he should get the cup next to Tui Naiau; since then the man who bears the name of Moala drinks second. Malani gave the other *fati* to Tui Tumbou. In Tongan style the kava is said to jump, which I understood to mean that it went from one side of the ring to the other, over to the back of the bowl, back to the ring and so forth. The order is left much to the discretion of the master of ceremonies. In Tonga the cup is received with both hands but the arms must not be stretched out to receive it. When an empty cup is returned, the cup bearers sit down while it is being filled again. When the name of one of them is called out he takes his cup to the back of the ring, sits down, drinks it and returns to do his office. The kava maker drinks last.

While the kava is being made, pig or bananas are sometimes brought and set before the people in the ring. In Tonga this is called *fono,* which the Fijians translate *i wase ni yanggona.* In Tonga a whole pig is brought. If a man sits in the ring, a grandchild or other relative comes and takes it away. It is not taken away at random; if a man sees his grandfather or father in the ring he goes up to him and takes away his share and eats it; this is called *kai fono, kai* meaning to eat; those in the ring merely drink. A man's share is called "his" using not the possessive of food *kena*, but the possessive of ordinary possession *ona*; in other words it is not his food, but his property; but that is only a way of speaking, as some nobleman at the back carries it away and eats it; but he will cut off a bit for the man from whom he took it. If a nobleman does not come and eat the *fono* it makes the man look foolish, it puts him to shame; he will stealthily stow it away behind his back, or call some one to carry it away.

Lauans admire the Tongan way of making kava. In Tonga at meals it is difficult to say who is chief, but it is patent at kava.

Fijian Kava Ceremony

The Fijian state kava was discontinued under the rule of Maafu, the Tongan, but the native style was restored under the fourth Lord of Naiau.

The Fijian style is used in the wading ceremony and at installation of chiefs. It is held indoors. The High Chief sits at the top but with only one herald by his side. The rope of the bowl is stretched towards Roko Sau. The kava maker sits alone at the bowl. The choir sits huddled

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behind and beside the kava bowl. The herald does not allot (*vota*) the kava, but the cup bearer decides to whom he will take it. There is no *yalofi;* anyone can sit at the sides. It is allowed to stretch the legs. There is no food offering.

The kava having been pounded beforehand and placed in the bowl, the kava maker tilts the bowl forward saying, "The measure is offered" (*sa sevu tu na i vakarau*).

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The herald answers "Knead," using the Tongan word *palu* (in Fijian it would be *lomba*). The kava maker kneads, then strains the kava. When a certain point is reached the leader of the choir (*ndau ni vuthu*) begins to sing in a small, quavering voice; when he has sung two lines another joins him in a lower pitch; at the seventh line the whole choir comes in with a deep drone (*ndrungu*). The kava song (*meke ni yanggona*) was lost with the advent of the Tongans. The Matuku men are noted as singers of the kava song; failing them, the Levuka men sing.

The kava song in use in Lakemba is that known from the first words as *Mothemothe ni mbongi.* It comes from Thakaundrove. I obtained the text in Taveuni. The herald of Namata has published a version (11, p. 191, December, 1913; p. 185, 1894):

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Mothemothe ni mbongi, ma singa othake,	Sleeping at night; the day dawns,
A singa ka sa tangga no i langi.	The sun is on the war path in the sky.
La ki thavu na yanggona me tholati.	They go and pull up the kava to bring it.
Mbiu koto i takari ni vale.	It is set down at the door of the house.
A solo ka sa mothe no i thake.	The strangers are sleeping at the upper end.
Soraki yanggona me na kari,	Offer up the kava that it may be scraped.
Tau ya no i mba ni langakali.	It rests against the branch of *langakali.*[a]
Tanoa au thavuta i langi.	I raise the bowl towards heaven.
Vakarau na yanggona, ma sevuraki,	The kava is prepared and prayed over;
Sevuraki ma kere tumbu i langi	Prayed over, and bubbles up heavenward.
La ki yana no vunilangi.[a]	Goes and seizes (?reaches) the horizon.
Mothemothe nggai singa na vanua;	Sleeping; then the day comes over the land.
Ma mbuthi i rara na lewe rua,	Call the pair
Me la ki thavu na mba ni kasa vula.	To go and pull up the branch of the white stem.
Ma mbiu koto i ra, nda kauta.	Put it down; let us carry it,
Tau ya no e mata ravi tuka.	It is set down before the door outside;
Au yandrayandra era there tu ya.	I awake; they are standing up.
Ru kathivi Andi yani i kumbuya.	They call mylady at the upper end of the house—
Sa singa rara na vanua.	It is broad daylight.
Me mbasu na waka me tou ngunuva.	Let the root be broken up that we may drink.
Ma lingia a kena wai mbulambula.	Then its living water is poured out;

[a] Na mata: Taveuni: *na io na no na vanua.*
[a] *Vakatanggara e na kali; vakatanggara = vakatatava.*

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Na wai sevu ma kere savuya.

Sa kena kambisa koto ma na utha.
Kena kambisa koto ma na utha.
A yanggona kau a laki thavuta,
Tara tu e ndua na matua.
Laveta onggo ka samu na vanua;

Laki mama na yanggona ravusa.
Wai liwaliwa ko lave tumbu ya,
Lingia i mbati ni tanoa.
Tonitoni ma e ndua na matua,
Ma thavuta thokothoko a vanua.
Na i mbo kau sa vakalutuma
Tiko sombu ru ombota malua.
Yanggona ni sau ka vala ni kua.

Me kua soti na vakasausa.
Thombota, era mundu vakandua.
Lose' oti na yanggona ru thombota.

Kena mbilo kau viri ki na longa.
Ra sa solota levu toka
Kothei ndina me na tu yanggona.
Rau nggai mbolea na marama sola:
Andi Ngganuya ma tu yanggona;
Senikumba lave wai ndroka.
Ondru there, ondru there malua
Ondru mai lave ki kumbu kandua

Tiko kina a sau ni vanua.
Matha oti mo ndru tiko malua.

Thombolaki yanggona ni vanua;
Kena i ombo e malausausa,
Vakambiu a mata ni vanua.

The water of the offering bubbles and splashes.
It is like the dropping of the rain.
It is like the dropping of the rain.
The kava I went to pull up
An old man touches.[8]
"I lift it here, and let the land be smitten"[9]
They go on to chew the dry kava.
Lift up the cold water,
Pour it on the side of the bowl.
An old man prays,
He mentions all the lands.
I drop the strainer.
They sit down, they clap gently.
The kava of the High Chief is to be made today;
Let there not be any noise.
They clap and cease together.
When the kava has been strained they clap.
I throw the cup on the mat.
They all dispute (?)
Who indeed shall be cup-bearer.
Then the two foreign ladies volunteer,
Lady Ngganuya is cup-bearer.
Senikumba carries the fresh water.
They rise, they rise slowly,
They raise it towards the other end of the house,
Where sits the Chief of the Land.
When the cup is drained they sit down slowly.
The kava of the land is clapped;
The clapping is loud and fast,
The herald bids them stop.

Each line is repeated once only. In singing this, as in other songs, vowels are supplied to fit the music as *taanoa*, for *tanoa*, *veanua* for *vanua*, *ravuosa* for *ravusa*; *thereatuya* for *theretuya*. This syllable *ya* is constantly added in songs at the end of a line to make it rhyme. In Mbauan style the last two syllables are dropped; in Thakaundrove they are dragged out. The dialect is largely Thakaundrove; some words are in the dialect of the north of Viti Levu. They go far afield for words so that the metre may be correct.

During the singing the herald cleans three cups; two for the chief, one for himself. At line two in the last stanza, he throws forward two cups according to the words of the song. The cup bearer, who has been seated at the rear, here steps into the ring from the right. He is called Tu Yang-

[7] *Namata*, lose; *tavevui* and Levuka, *matha*.

[8] Acknowledges the offering. The following line is the prayer, which in the old days used to contain the wish that the enemy might be destroyed (6, p. 62).

[9] The first prayer is said when the root has been presented; the second, when the water is being poured.

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gona (Sir Kava, or Lord of the Kava). For this purpose, a noble youth, usually a fine young man, is chosen. His body shines with oil; his face is blackened; he is dressed as for a dance with a collar and a skirt of *vau* bark dyed pink and green. He picks up one cup, while another man, who comes up on the left, picks up the other; this is the Tu Wai Ndroka, or Lord of Fresh Water; he is not specially attired. When the cup bearer has picked up the cup, he turns round slowly towards the bowl with legs slightly apart, raising first one foot then the other, with a slight pendulum motion of the whole body in time with the music. He squats down before the bowl with knees well apart, an attitude called *musu*, turning his back on the chief, and holds the cup over the bowl. Someone forms the strainer into the shape of a cup; the kava maker pours kava upon it, which trickles through into the cup. This is done only for the Lord of Naiau. At line eight he rises slowly, holding the cup at arm's length; at the next line he faces the High Chief; at the next he sinks down still holding the cup at arm's length, and as he squats down strikes some attitudes which are called dancing. (The Matuku men are skilled in this dance, but not the Levuka men.) The song then ceases and the assembly calls out, *"Oie ndina, oie tu e"* (Ah! it is true, ah! stand, oh!).

The choir-leader calls out, "Stand forward" (*tu yani ki thake le*).

The cup bearer stands up, lowers his arms, walks up naturally to the Chief and pours the kava into Tui Naiau's own cup, then walks away. Sir Fresh Water, who never attitudinizes, steps up and adds some water. This custom of "fresh water" is only observed for one who has been appointed Sau; if it were done for any other man he would fall ill. As Tui Naiau is about to drink, the choir leader cries out "Oie ndua, sa, oie ndua thombo."[10] Then all the singers clap rythmically together. As Tui Naiau stops drinking the leader cries, "Leave off" (*mbiu*), and the clapping breaks into an irregular straggle and all exclaim.

"Ah! it is empty!" (*a matha!*) an exclamation called *vakamatha*, to say "empty."

The next cup is brought without ceremony to the herald, and to the others in order of their precedence. The last survivor of the oldest generation drinks next because he is "the nobles' little father"; then comes the survivor of the next generation. After him the order will be uncertain. If the present High Chief's eldest sister's son were present he would drink next to Tui Naiau, that is, after the herald, because he is a nobleman of Mbau.

Only one round of kava is served.

[10] *Ndua* is a ceremonial word which occurs in the *tama* and other formulae, *ndua* probably being a contraction of *ndua o—Sa:?—thombo*: to clap.

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INSTALLATION OF THE SAU

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The following account is given of the installation of new Chief as Roko Sau. (See also 7, p. 70.)

The family of the Vuanirewa make kava; Tui Mereke strains it. There is no singing; the kava is merely taken up to the chief. The two Ramasi, that is the Lord of Tumbou and the Lord of Nasangalau, tie a piece of bark cloth (*masi*) on Roko Sau's arm. One of the two, or else the Vakavanua or the chief of Nukunuku admonishes him and the people of Lakemba that he should be loved, that what he says should be accepted, that they should hearken to what he says, that he should be good to the people of the land.

No one may come in during the ceremony. On that day and for four days afterward no crying or beating of bark cloth is allowed. Every day they bring in feasts from all the villages. He stays in the house for those four days; this is called *tonivaki* [a term also applied to the staying in after a funeral]. After four nights he goes to bathe; a feast is then held called the bathing feast.

Another informant says the retirement lasts for eight days and a man of Katumbalevu proper claims that it is the function of Katumbalevu to rise after the drinking of the kava and tell the Sau "they give all things into his hands and he must be good to the people."

So long as the chief is only Roko Sau the people of Naiau bring him the first fruits of every kind of food.

INSTALLATION OF THE TUI NAIAU

Tui Ndevo, Tui Liku, chiefs of Naiau, and the Vaka of Naiau discuss the installation of Tui Naiau:

A noble of Tumbou will strain the kava, and another will bear the cup. The man who strains the kava stands; he stands with crossed legs, as is proper in all installations, including Mbau. The post of cup-bearer is a difficult one and only a nobleman can be chosen for it; he wears a grass skirt. Tui Naro, the chief of Naiau, ties bark cloth on Tui Naiau's arm, and will tell him to be kind to the people of the land, not to be choleric, to make the people of the land at home, to invite them often, to be kind to them that they may enjoy his company, not to close the door on the Naiau people. Randi Naiau drinks next to Tui Naiau, then the herald (*mata ni vanua*).

Any minor office that may be vacant is filled on that occasion. Thus at Ratu Finau's installation, one nobleman was installed as Envoy to Mbau, though the office properly belongs to Narewandamu; another, as envoy to Thakaundrove, and the head of the Lemaki family as Lemaki. The Lord of Tumbou apportioned their kava. He merely said, "This is the kava for So-and-so, to appoint him to bear the name of So-and-so."

During the ceremony the Naiau people mount guard with clubs to see that no one speaks. Afterwards while the people of the land and the nobles go home, the village headman and the true chiefs assemble in a house which is to be their club house (*mbure*), in order that there may be no noise or crying of children; if anyone makes a noise, he is fined and must make a feast. The Tui Naiau keeps the scarfs on his arms for four days. Feasts are made for the chiefs every day for four days, after which they all make merry. Once the chief is installed as Tui Naiau, the Naiau

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people bring him gifts—manufactured articles and fish, whereas formerly it was only the fruits of the earth.

After his installation, the High Chief visited the subject islands. This was called *va vanua,* that is "to tread on the land." Another term was *vakasenungganungga,* "to make *Nelitris vitiensis* (A. Gray) to bloom." The message announcing his coming is called *vakamelomelo,* which means "to get an overnight oven prepared." The feast made for him is called *iwawa,* that is "waiting feast." The chief brings gifts with him.

INSTALLATION OF VILLAGE CHIEFS

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In discussing village chiefs, an informant states:

In olden times if the Sau went to a place and saw that the headman misbehaved he would dismiss him and appoint another. Only in Nasangalau are there proper chiefs. It is characteristic both of the fluidity of Fijian institutions and the people's manner of expressing this fluidity by contradictory statements that my informant stated that it is impossible for the High Chief to dismiss the chief of Nasangalau, yet possible since the High Chief is far greater.

In Yandrana the clan of Mbaumbunia discuss who shall be chief of Yandrana. Then the High Chief asks whom they have chosen and sends some gentleman down who ties a cloth on the new chief's right arm. Then the kava turns first to the new Lord of Yandrana, then to the Tui Ra of Yandrana, then to the Vaka of Yandrana, then to the nobleman who has come to install him. The Lord of Yandrana presents this nobleman with the mats on which he sat, with clothing and whale's teeth.

A minor chief, whether of Tumbou or the Country, plants taro and when it is mature brings it to the High Chief. This feast is called "the hand washing feast" (*i vuluvulu*).

The installation of Ramasi of Nasangalau is described as follows:

The kava faces Ramasi, who is dressed up. A nobleman from Tumbou sits beside him accompanied by a herald. They beat the drum. Then meet on the Green. When the kava "stands before his face" [when the cup-bearer faces him], the herald from Tumbou takes a piece of bark cloth; then a turban is brought and twisted like the twisting of a rope. The herald from Tumbou then speaks, "Here is the kava for you, Ramasi. It has been decided that you should drink kava. As for the bark cloth I am holding, it is the cloth of the land. Love then your people; invite them to your house to eat. If your character is going to be bad you shall not drink your kava." Then he says, "Give him the kava to drink." Then he stops him and says, "Do not give him the kava to drink." He admonishes him again, "Think of the nobles of Tumbou that will come; be kind to them, and also to the people of the village be kind." Then he says, "Bring the kava to drink." Ramasi drinks and they clap. Then they tie on the bark cloth. Ramasi then goes to sleep, while they keep watch (*tonitoni*). For two nights he sleeps on and they keep making feasts. On the third day there is also a feast. On the fourth day they make a bathing feast for the Lord of Natokalau (Ramasi), and the Tumbou people go home. Ramasi would plant taro and take it to Tumbou as a feast "for the washing of the hands" (*i vu luvulu*). The Ramasi are proper chiefs: they still have "fresh water" in their kava, only it is squeezed into the cup and not into the strainer as for Tui Naiau.

Tui Soso of Nukunuku used to have fresh water, but this is no longer allowed by the High Chief.

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INSTALLATION OF THE CHIEF OF THITHIA

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The following account is given of the installation of a chief of Thithia:

Mambula install the chief; they decide who shall be chief, whether Ngoneulu or Nggitawa, or another. Then they tie on his arm some bark cloth, that he may stay four days in the house, after which he goes to bathe. When the kava ceremony of the High Chief is held all the villages are emptied of their inhabitants to prepare the kava and make a feast. The chief sits by the door with a scarf on his arm. The other people sit outside in two rows. At the other end stands the kava bowl on the Green. The women and children are away in the bush lest one should shout or cry. The kava is strained and poured out. There are two cup bearers, the Lord of the Kava and the Lord of Fresh Water. The cup bearers bring the kava to the chief. As they walk up the people clap their hands twice with the fingers tip to tip and once with the palms crossed. If a man claps wrong, or laughs, or shouts, he is fined; the fine for that village is to pull up a coconut palm without breaking a single root or leaf, to hang crabs on the roots and carry the whole to the house of Tui Thithia. Each time they clap with hands crossed the cup bearers put one foot down; they do not cross their legs. The Tui Thithia drinks, then the cup bearers return to their seats, keeping time to the clapping as in coming up. Then the clapping ceases. The herald drinks next. If the Tui Thithia is of the Nggitawa clan a man of Turangaulu drinks next to the herald; then comes Tui Mambu or Mambula of the clan Mambula; the fifth is a nobleman of Vunisea; the sixth is a chief of some village; the seventh of another village. When Tui Thithia bathes it is the duty of the Tarukuans to make a feast as "opener of the door"; another later is "bathing feast." At daybreak they are on the Green; they sit in the doorway, the first man holding the top leaf of a banana tree. This is the plate for the feast. Then they withdraw.

If a nobleman of Turangaulu drinks as Tui Thithia, a Takala is appointed from Vunisea, an Envoy to Lakemba from Nggitawa, a Vakavanua from Turangaulu. When the Tui Thithia dies the Takala becomes Tui Thithia and so each one moves up. *This statement can only be taken as an example of what might or ought to happen.* In actual practice nearly all the chiefs have been of Turangaulu, but the Takala has always succeeded the Tui Thithia, except recently when Takala has continued under several Tui Thithia.

The duties of the Vakavanua are to collect feasts and to sit down to receive them.

INSTALLATION OF THE TUI LEVUKA

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The most powerful chief of Mbau is the Vunivalu. He is installed as such by the people of Kamba; but this installation is of small importance compared with his installation as Tui Levuka which is performed by the people of Levuka, and is a thing of great prestige (7, pp. 72, 73).

The Levukans brought with them to Mbau a big sheet of bark cloth. A week before the ceremony the people cut firewood, drew water, and gathered leaves for plates so that every one being provided with necessities might remain indoors after the ceremony. The kava ceremony is very difficult. . .

All the Levukans wore turbans; the other people might not wear a turban or any ornament on their arms. If a Levukan should see a man wearing a turban or other ornament he would at once remove it. There were three men making kava. When the cup was full the cup bearer held it level with his shoulders and crossed his legs as he went; the people clapped their hands keeping time with his feet so that the setting down of his feet and the clapping should not be out of time. The chief had a

1: Hocart Y-5 (ca. 1920) 1929 OQ6 Lau OQ6
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sash on one arm; he may not take the cup with that hand or he will be fined. When he has had his cup the chiefs of the various villages drink also. At Thakombau's installation Ndaulakemba and Metuisela's father each took one end of a sash, folded it, and tied it on the Vunivalu's arm, saying, "Let the bark cloth be tied to be the cloth of your food, the cloth of your riches, also reverence him since he is your lord." Then those who made the kava retired. The two men then brought four hundred whale's teeth; they walked up to the chief carrying them, and half way each crossed over to the other side. The chief held out his arms sideways and they hung whale's teeth upon them till he could no longer bear the weight, then he put them down. Then they loaded his arms again. The nobles of Mbau took off their clothes to those who made the kava. Each man got one bale.

On the day on which the chief drinks until the drinking is over it is forbidden to anyone to go out of doors or for any child to cry. This lasts four nights. After fetching water the men come to the house and call out, "Water!" then the people inside open the door, and one or two big jars are brought in; then the door is shut so that no one may go out. Kava is made at the beginning of the night, then again at cockcrow. This is repeated on four successive nights. During those nights the Vunivalu and Ndaulakemba sleep out of doors. All those nights no lights are allowed out of doors, and if any canoe come in sight the men go out and seize it. That is why the kava is feared, for any one caught outside is fined. At the end of the four nights the chief bathes; then they fire off muskets so that the whole land may hear that he has bathed; then all the people are set free and anyone who wishes to come to Mbau by sea or land may come. When the chief of Mbau was about to bathe, the men of Soso and of Lasakau used to go secretly to some village and kill a man for the bathing. Of old they had men for the bathing feast. The body was offered up to the chiefs of Levuka, baked and eaten.

OFFERINGS

Food and manufactured articles are continually and on all occasions being offered up with prescribed ceremonials. The general term for making a presentation of food or other articles is "to make a feast, to make goods" (*vala mangiti, vala i yau*). The term *vakathambo* refers more particularly to the act and formula of offering up. This ceremonial is the foundation of all Fijian ceremonial.

If it is a ceremonial gift, the person to whom it is offered sits cross-legged at the upper end of the room, if it is indoors, with his herald at his side. Those making the presentation come and sit with legs crossed near the door; their herald crawls forward and sits down cross-legged opposite the recipient, and lays down the gift (some old men kneel with knees apart and sit on their heels); the herald claps his hands with palms crossed, perhaps five times, bends forward and, laying both hands on the gift, says,

Hm, a small [names the article] I am touching here [again names the article] for you the gentleman of So-and-so. It is well known to you that our land is a poor land, a land of famine, where not a tree grows. Just what we have found we have brought. If it is small bear with it. My speech is lengthy, let it be offered up and emerge."[11]

[11] The last sentence is fixed; in Fijian it runs: *"Sa mbalambalavu a nggou vosa ka sosora thake tu yani ka, vuuvu."* *Sosora* is a ceremonial word; *soraki* is Rewan for *vakathambori*.

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Serving

264 [272] [415] Normally two meals a day are eaten; one out at work; the other on the return home. Now there is a tendency to begin the day with bread and tea sugared to a syrup. Modern dishes are much used at present, but for soup the coconut cup is retained, which differs from the kava cup in being shallow, roughly cut, and thinned down.

The family usually take meals in the kitchen, sitting in a ring. After the food is laid before all, grace is said. In the house of a noble on Sundays or when there is an honored guest, meals are eaten in the house with more ceremony; the principal personage sitting at the top; the women, as a rule, not joining. Yams and taro are brought and set before each guest; the women will sit before distinguished persons and fan the food. The fish or fowl is brought in a pot covered with a banana leaf, and set down near the door. A girl pours out a little soup in a cup and it is handed up; the guests bite their yam and sip their soup alternately, and when they want more soup they throw their cup forward to be filled again; when a guest has had enough soup he turns his cup upside down. Following the serving of the soup, the pot is emptied onto a flat wooden dish, and the fish and green, or boiled fowl is distributed. Sauce is put in coconut shells and each guest holds his with one hand and picks up his fish or yam with the other. There is little conversation; everyone is busy eating.

264 565 When a nobleman has finished eating, a basin of water is passed up to him; as soon as he washes his hands the lesser people and all the women, including the wife, clap (*thombo*) slowly. For the Tui Naiau everyone claps and Randi Naiau is always careful to start the clapping; a lady of high rank would clap for her husband, but probably not for her son. This custom is called *yara mbenu* (to drag away the rubbish) in other parts of Fiji; I do not know the name in Lau; it is never done for Europeans.

The Lauans say:

> Our meals are well served in European style, whereas in Tonga every one gobbles up what he can, and the late comer gets nothing; each man helps himself straight from the oven and sits down anywhere to eat; they eat the fish first, then drink the soup to dispose of the fish quickly so that if anyone comes they say, "Oh! we are only drinking soup." In Fiji they scrape the coconut shells and keep them; in Tonga they pick up any shell, in which fowls may have been pecking, blow in it, rub it with their hands, and after using it throw it away. In Fiji at meals it appears who is noble, whereas in Tonga they sit anyhow and do not clap. In Tonga they eat yams only; they do not often have a relish as in Fiji. Therefore the Tongans who come to Lau and see Fijian food and houses have some respect for the Lauans.

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226 796 ceremonially. The envoy to Fulanga and the high chief then give a feast (*i nggaravi*) to the sailors.

241 796 In the bush near the village of Naivindamu, Fulanga, a *mbau* tree, which belongs to Lingau clan, is fenced with a stone wall and called *mbau ni sevu*. The fruit of the tree is tabu to all but members of the Lingau clan.

On Ongea the main offerings of first fruits are held annually for the mangrove (*Rhizophora mucronata*) and the *yangai*. The *yangai* is ripe in June and July. The offerings are presented to the chief of Ongea. Formerly every turtle caught was also presented to him, but today this custom is not regularly observed.

On Kambara in olden days the offering of *ndawa*, Tahitian chestnuts, and breadfruit was presented to the chief of Kambara. All turtles caught were presented to him also. Today first fruit offerings are presented only when the crop is particularly good. The chief of crops sets and lifts the tabu. In April, while I was on the island, an offering of sweet yams was made in Tokalau. The men of the village collected sweet yams from their gardens and took them to the chief of crops, who examined them. After they had been steamed in the clan earth ovens, the chief of crops presented them to the chief of Kambara and the village headman jointly. Afterwards the food was divided and eaten by the village.

On Mothe an annual offering of first fruits is held for breadfruit and Tahitian chestnuts, and an offering of garden products for yams, sweet potatoes, and sweet yams. The offering was formerly presented to the priest, but now it goes to the chief of Mothe. From each clump of banana trees the uppermost ring of the first bunch of the season is given annually to the chief. Each season the first cluster of fruit from each *ndawa* tree goes to the chief. He also receives all turtles, all *ndonu* and all *sangga* fish caught by the Mothe people.

On Namuka the last offering was held several years ago. They stopped the tabu because they had plenty of food.

KAVA CEREMONY

796 Kava drinking is part of all important ceremonials. It is indispensable in rites connected with the chief—his death, marriage, circumcision; the reception of a visiting chief; and the building of a chief's house or canoe. It always precedes a feast (*mangitchi*).

Kava root is a valuable object of ceremonial exchange. It is in great demand, for kava is scarce on the southern islands where it is rarely planted and must be imported from other parts of Fiji. When a stranger arrives in a village he presents ceremonially a whole fresh kava root to the hosts. Dry kava roots are substituted when the green plant is not available. Kava is never prepared and drunk without ceremony, which is elaborate in the

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presence of a chief. Kava ceremonies vary slightly on different islands and for different occasions. In southern Lau on formal occasions a mixed Tongan and old Lauan kava ceremony is used. On less formal occasions a simplification of the Tongan ceremony is customary. The natives say that the Lauan ceremony is long and is marked by much hand clapping, whereas the Tongan ceremony is short and simple. The Tongans say, "Faka sinisini ko Fishi. Sa levu na topotopo" (Too many tens in Fiji, too much clapping), meaning that the Fijian ceremony is too elaborate.

The kava ceremony for the chief of Kambara is as follows:

The kava drinkers sit cross-legged in circular formation called *yalofi*, in the following order: the chief sits in the center of the upper end of the house. On his left sits his herald, on his right, another chief or herald. The clan elders sit in two rows on either side of the chief. Those of highest rank sit nearest the chief. At the lower end of the house, opposite and facing the chief, sits a young man who is the kava maker (*palu yanggona*). In front of him stands the kava bowl, which is a wooden bowl (*kumete ni yanggona*) made of greenheart, usually with four legs. The bowl used for a chief has cowry shells tied to the sennit string handle, which is stretched toward him. It is tabu to use this bowl except in kava ceremonies for the chief. In olden days, according to the natives, an earthenware kava bowl without legs (*ndari ni yanggona*) was used.

On each side of the kava maker sits a young man, called assistant at the bowl (*nggaravi kumete*). The young men who pound the kava sit behind the kava maker. Either green or dry kava is used, but natives say the green root makes a drink which is more tasty and digestible. A flat stone slab is placed on a kava mat (*yambe ni yanggona*) and when the root has been pounded with a rough stone hammer into bits, the stone slab is tilted so that the bits of root fall on the mat, the mat is passed to one of the assistants, who slides the kava bits into the kava bowl. Occasionally a wooden mortar and an iron pestle are used.

Formerly kava root was chewed by youths. The kava chewers (*matha*) sat behind the kava maker. They were young men of rank related to the chief. The chewed root was removed from the mouth and placed on the strainer (*i vauvau*), composed of strips of the inner bark of the *Hibiscus tiliaceus* (*vau*), which lay in the bowl; or it was passed to one of the assistants, who put it into the bowl. The kava maker and assistants chewed also. (Old men who have chewed kava in their youth seem to have better preserved teeth than those who have not chewed it. Chewing has been forbidden by the colonial government.)

When sufficient kava has been prepared the kava maker raises the bowl by the two rear legs and says, "Kawa nai mama" (The kava is chewed).

The herald answers, "Kuo holo" (It is kneaded), and the kava maker lowers the bowl. The herald adds, "Tukuwatu" (put it down), and the kava maker puts the bowl down. When it is resting on the ground the herald says, "Tutumalie pe kae palu" (All right, mix). The kava maker places his hands, fingers together, palms down, on the sides of the bowl. The herald looks at them and if they are not clean he says nothing and the kava maker is replaced by another. If they are clean he says, "Palu, tafoki kimoua" (Kava maker, turn), and the two assistants move forward to the bowl. During the mixing and serving they face the bowl, otherwise they face the chief.

Then the herald says, "Lini o ma wai" (Pour the water). The kava maker places his hands in the bowl and the assistant who is sitting on the right of the kava maker pours water from the water container onto the kava maker's hands. It is poured away from the kava maker. It is tabu to pour it toward him. Either a bamboo water container (*ndangoni wai*), imported from Viti Levu, an earthenware pot (*kuro*), or an imported bucket is used.

The kava maker mixes the kava. Before straining it he squeezes the mixture over

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the bowl to show its consistency and color. The herald judges it. If more water is needed he repeats "Pour the water", and more water is added. If it is satisfactory he says, "Lele" (Good). Then the kava maker begins to strain the mixture. If he squeezes with the right hand he keeps the left elbow on his left knee and vice versa. It is tabu to raise the elbow above the knee while squeezing. If this tabu is broken, he may never make kava for the chief again. It is very tabu (*tambu sara*) for the kava maker to straighten his legs or to shake the strainer while straining. He passes it back to be shaken out.

When the kava has been strained the kava maker coils the strainer, passes it around the bowl and claps on it two or three times. He says, "Maa e kawa ni" (This kava is clear). The herald says, "Fakatau" (Wring it out). The cup bearer (*vakatau*), a young noble, who has been sitting behind the bowl, comes forward and squats in front of and facing the bowl.

The drink is served in a highly polished cup (*mbilo*) usually made of the pointed end of a coconut shell. The chief has his own cup which is tabu to all others. The cup bearer holds the serving cup over the bowl with both hands, his fingers on the outside of the cup. The kava maker squeezes some kava from the strainer into it. When the cup is full, the cup bearer lifts it with arms extended shoulder high. Then, still in squatting position, he turns. He rises to a standing position, walks slowly toward the chief, kneels with one knee ahead of the other, and fills the chief's cup, which the chief holds toward him with one hand, the index finger extending over the rim of the cup. The chief drinks the kava in one draught. Meanwhile the cup bearer returns to the kava bowl and places the serving cup beside it. Then he takes a cup of water from the assistant, and, facing the chief, stands before the bowl. The chief, after drinking, puts his empty cup down in front of him and the herald says, "A matha" (It is empty). Then all the members of the kava circle clap with hollow hands crosswise (*thombo*) but not in unison. The chief spits toward the side wall of the house, drinks water offered by the cup bearer, and spits again. The cup bearer returns to the bowl and sits down, cross-legged, in front of it. He claps two or three times. The members of the kava circle clap only after the chief has drunk. All the drinkers except the chief clap before receiving the cup.

The cup bearer picks up the cup and holds it to be filled a second time. When it is full he turns as before, and, holding the cup with arms either extended or slightly bent, he stands up straight and faces the chief. The assistant says, "Kawa kuo heka" (The kava is taken up).

The herald replies, "Aui e ma—" (Take it to so-and-so). The recipient claps two or three times, receives the cup, and drinks from it. The cup bearer returns to his place in front of the bowl but does not clap. When the man finishes drinking he throws the cup toward the bowl on the mat in front of him. The cup should not be spun.

The cup bearer and usually the kava maker and assistants dress in ceremonial attire. They wear long pieces of Fijian barkcloth around their waists and wreaths around their necks. They oil their bodies and paint their faces black.

The order of drinking depends on rank and often does not correspond to the order of seating in the kava circle. The herald decides the order and calls out all the titles except that of the chief. When the chief has drunk, the herald who is not calling drinks, then another chief, then the second herald, and so on. The chief of Kambara says that formerly if the high chief came to Kambara he sat in the place of honor and the chief of Kambara prepared the kava. The chief of Kambara's herald sat next to the chief, and the envoy to Lakemba directed the preparations and called the order of drinking as

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follows: the high chief, the high chief's herald, the oldest man, the chief of Kambara, the envoy to Lakemba, and so forth.

After the first round of kava, when all the members of the kava circle have drunk, the cup bearer returns to his seat behind the kava bowl, and claps two or three times. The herald decides when the second round shall be served. He says, "Fakatau" (Wring it out), and the ceremony is repeated.

All kava which has been prepared must be drunk. When the last bowl has been drunk the kava maker coils the strainer and claps on it three times. The members of the kava circle say, "Malo a vala yanggona" or "Vinaka a vala yanggona" (The kava is well made). The men sitting behind the bowl come and take it out. Then people in the kava circle may leave.

On Namuka kava songs (*meke ni yanggona*) are frequently sung during the kava ceremony. I was welcomed to the island by a kava ceremony. A cup bearer, dressed in ceremonial attire, served the kava. After the first cup had been filled at the kava bowl, he began a series of jerky movements, a sort of dance in time with the kava song which was being sung, and slowly arose facing me. He then walked to me and served me.

The kava song follows:

Mothemothe ni mbongi ka singa vaka,	Sleep at night till daylight,
Singa ka sa tangga nai langi,	The sun is up in the sky,
Laki thavu mai na yanggona me na kari,	Kava root is dug and scraped,
Ra tau ya no i mba ni langakali,	To be laid on the *langakali* branch,
Tanoa ka laveta i thake,	The bowl is lifted high,
Vakarau na yanggona sevuraki,	Prepare the kava to be refined,
Sevuraki ka kere tu i langi,	The sound reaches the sky,
Langi a nonova,	The heavens are watching,
Mothemothe nggai singa a vanua.	Sleep till daylight.
Kathivi andi ka laki kumbunya,	Call the lady who has gone to the other side,
Sa singa rarama na vanua.	For it is now daylight.
Mbasu na waka me tou ngguuva,	Break the kava root and let us drink here,
Livi na kena wai mbulambula,	The water poured in is quite clear,
Wai sevu ma kere savuya,	I can hear the sound of it again,
Kena kambisa koto ma na utha.	Like the falling of gentle rain.

In southern Lau the kava *meke* is found only on Namuka but *meke* are often danced between rounds of kava.

A Tongan custom occasionally observed in Lau is the *wase ni yanggona* (kava feast). While the chief is drinking, a feast is prepared for him, usually by his younger brothers and parallel cousins. The food is served during the kava ceremony to the kava circle. When the food is ready the herald chooses two men from the circle to divide the feast. The young men sitting behind the bowl carry in the shares. The best share is given to the chief, the next to the herald, and so on according to the drinking order. The feast is eaten in the kava circle and the remaining food removed. Those sitting behind the bowl go outside to eat.

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The procedure is simple on less formal occasions, such as marriage or death feasts for individuals in the village. The kava is prepared either by young men or by girls. Sometimes the kava maker and the cup bearer are girls and the kava chewers are men. In olden days kava was prepared and drunk by men only. Today it is occasionally drunk by women in southern Lau. The assistants at the bowl are frequently absent. Occasionally the bowl has several legs or no legs at all. It is not raised for inspection by the herald before water is added, the hands are not examined, and the mixture is tested, after being strained, by being poured into the bowl from a raised cup. The tabus pertaining to the straining process are not observed, and the drinking order is not fixed, nor is it called by the herald. The men in the kava circle usually smoke between rounds. To light his cigarette, which is leaf tobacco rolled in a dried banana leaf (*suluka*), each has placed before him a burning brand.

Occasionally a few individuals hold a kava party in the very early morning called *pongipongi*. Lauans say this is a Tongan custom.

FEASTS

Every important ceremony is marked by a feast, which is presented by one group to another, divided into shares, and distributed according to rank to both recipients and donors. Feasts vary in size and quality of food according to the rank of the recipients and the resources of the donors. Food for most feasts differs from that of the daily meal only in the larger quantity for each individual and in the addition of a sweet pudding for each. Communal fishing which provides fish for the feast usually yields more and larger fish than are caught daily by the women. Turtle and pig are great delicacies served only at important feasts for high ranking persons. Turtle is considered the most chiefly food.

In Lau important feasts are steamed in the earth oven (pl. 2, *A*) by men, while small feasts, eaten in the morning, are boiled by women. In contrast to the daily use of the earth oven in Lau (p. 153) it is used only for feasts in the interior of Viti Levu.

The cooked food for a large feast is placed on the village ceremonial ground or outside the house of the recipient and is presented according to the usual ceremony (pp. 65-66) by one of the donors. A small feast is divided outside the house of the donor. Coconut leaves are spread on the ground and the food from the oven is piled upon them. Freshly plaited coconut-leaf baskets, one for each household, are arranged in a circle around the food. The food is shared according to households and distributed by the host. At a large feast the food is distributed according to clans under the direction of the chief of crops or the chief of the ceremonial ground. True food (*kana utchina*), namely garden produce, is distributed first, then puddings, fish, turtle,

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342 313 A man may either select and cut the timber for his house himself, or make arrangements to have it done by his own village or a related village. If he cuts it himself, he fells the first suitable timber he sees for any part of the house and leaves it until he can get help to haul it to the house site. To [431] procure the help of a village he presents one or more whale's teeth or property such as mats and tapa to the ranking men of the village with his request. At the appointed time the necessary house posts are assigned to groups of men who select, fell, and transport them. The natives use imported metal ax blades, hafted like adzes, for felling timber. Long, heavy beams are carried on the shoulder. Hauling the timber takes two or more days, and during this time the owner provides the daily feast (*i nggaravi ni takathu ai vale*) for the workers.

342 283 The quantity of sennit needed for a house depends on the size of the house and the amount of ornamental lashing to be executed, but for even a small house a large quantity is necessary. An industrious man on Fulanga who was building a house 3.5 fathoms long, 2 fathoms and 2 spans wide, and about 3 fathoms high, estimated that he needed 6,000 fathoms of sennit. This he made in his leisure time, mainly in the evening. To complete such a task takes from six months to one year of steady work. Well-executed ornamental [555] lashing is very much admired by the natives and adds considerably to the owner's prestige. Frequently members of the owner's clan contribute sennit for the house.

342 After the timber has been hauled to the house site, it is shaped and smoothed (*sasau kathu*) by the owner or by the carpenter with metal bladed adzes of various sizes. Inasmuch as the Lauans take great pride in smooth, thick house posts this is slow, careful work.

When the parts of the main framework are ready to be erected, the sennit finished, and the harvest ripe, the day for erecting the main framework is set by the owner and the village headman, who announces it to the village. All the able-bodied men in the village help in the actual work. The old men, giving advice and telling stories, sit in a group under a temporary coconut-leaf thatched pavilion (*vakatu noloa*), near the house site. Properly, kava [272] should be provided by the owner; but on islands where kava is not raised it is often omitted.

On this first day of the actual house building the largest feast of the series is held. It is provided and prepared by the owner and his relatives. The men work on the ovens, and the women fish and boil the food. The women take no part in the actual house building. A small feast (*i takitaki*) is served in the morning at nine or ten o'clock. The main feast (*mangitchi ni kali vaka vale*) is served at four or five in the afternoon. It is distributed by the old men under the direction of the chief of the ceremonial ground or the

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322 534 mourning tabu, or the call to service in the mission church—has its stylized gong beat (fig. 4).

The natives are sensitive to the quality of gong tones, and full, round tones are much admired. A good gong maker is known throughout the group, and his gongs are recognized by their shape and sound. Namuka became the center of the gong industry in Christian times through the gong maker, Metui of Mbutolu clan. The natives believe that Metui came from Kambara. Slit-gongs from Namuka are in demand all over Lau and on Viti Levu. Today most of the men of Undu, Kambara, know how to make gongs, but only one or two men are really skillful.

Dance gongs (*lali ni meke*), also called *vakamalolo* gongs (*lali ni vakamalolo*), are also made on Namuka. This gong consists of a small canoe-shaped block of greenheart about 1 meter long, with a small rectangular opening on the flat or upper side. The true drum or membranaphone is absent in Lau.

The natives say that formerly panpipes (*nduvu soro*) were made on Kambara. They consisted of five or six pieces of bamboo of equal diameter and various lengths, tied together with hibiscus twist.

Nose flutes (*nduvu tavu*) were also made. They consisted of a length of bamboo about 35 cm. long and 5 cm. in diameter with 4 holes cut in the bamboo. The flute was played through the nose.

KAVA CUP

322 415 272 The kava cup (*mbilo ni yanggona*) is made by men from the pointed end of a ripe coconut. The shell is scraped thin from the point outward with a shell or a piece of glass so that the point is emphasized and the striations are visible. It is polished inside and out and is rubbed with oil. Kava cups are occasionally made of greenheart.

WEAPONS

322 411 The most important weapons in Lau were the club (*i malungu*), the spear (*moto*), the bow (*ndakai tchitchi*), and the sling (*i rambo*).

Clubs were made by specialists, called *matai ni malungu*, mainly of *thau* (*Casuarina nodiflora*) wood, carved with designs which were accentuated with lime. Many different types of clubs were used. Those known to informants were: *totokia, kiekickavu, nggato, ndondonu, thulathula, malungu ni paki, linga ni marama,* and *manda.* There were also throwing clubs called *i kolo* and short clubs with thin handles and thick heads called *mbowai,* used for hand to hand conflict.

Spears were made by specialists, called *matai ni moto.* One-pointed spears were called *moto* and multi-pointed spears were called *saisai.* An effective

3: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934) 1940 OQ6 Lau OQ6
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302 Coconut oil is the most important cosmetic in Lau. Strongly scented with fragrant flowers, leaves and bark, it is rubbed after bathing on the legs, arms, breasts and on the hair. It keeps the skin soft in spite of constant exposure to sunlight and salt water, and imparts a sheen to the hair.

Dressing for a festival, the young people pour on oil until their bodies glisten. As they dance in long rows their shining rhythmic bodies look like bronze statues. The pungent scent of oil in a small native hut, however, is almost suffocating. Coconut oil holds an important place in the Lauan art [833] of love, not only because it stimulates the senses by keeping the skin smoothly lustrous and fragrant, but also because it reduces the friction between hot bodies mating in the breathless damp warmth of the tropics.

292 To participate in important ceremonies both men and wo-
287 men wear barkcloth. This is a soft, durable, fibrous material [531] made of the inner bark of the paper mulberry. It is elaborately stenciled with bold geometric designs in black and red ochre. Ample quantities of this cloth are wrapped around the hips and gathered at the waist with a band. Wreaths of green leaves, bright flowers, and strips of dyed hibiscus bark complete this striking ceremonial attire, which is a survival from olden times.

272 All important ceremonies are accompanied by drinking of
276 "kava", the narcotic root of the *Piper methysticum.* Kava is the favored native drink of the South Seas. When crushed and mixed with water, kava root produces a mild intoxication which frequently affects the legs rather than the head. Its reaction varies with the individual: on some it acts as a stimulant, on others as a sedative. Curiously enough, the novice can outdo the confirmed kava drinker, for the reaction is increased and accelerated by habit. The preparation and drinking of kava root is always accompanied by a colorful ceremony. The drinkers sit in a circle in which the chief has the place of honor. Opposite the chief sits the kava mixer,

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and in front of him is the wooden bowl in which the drink is mixed. The root is crushed between stones and mixed with water, strained, and passed to the drinkers with prescribed movements and phases accompanied by the ceremonial clapping of hands.

Formerly on ordinary occasions the men wore only a short waist cloth made of barkcloth, and the women a fringe like a hula skirt made of strips of the soft inner bark of the hibiscus. Unmarried girls wore the briefest possible fringe. The area covered by this fringe was tattooed, so without her skirt a girl looked as though she were wearing a closely fitted pair of shorts, printed with geometric black designs on a brown background.

Tattooing was forbidden by the missionaries, and the last tattooed woman in Lau died a few years ago. According to old women, the tattooing process was extremely painful. It was done after the girl's first menstruation in three or four installments, and covered a period of a year or more. The operation was performed in a special tabu hut which the men jokingly called the "black bottom". An old woman known as a tattoo expert dipped an adz-like instrument pointed with a shark's tooth or fish bone into a black dye, placed the point on the skin and struck it with a wooden hammer. If the girl accepted lovers during the process the pain would increase. When it was over, her fingers and the corners of her mouth were tattooed to show that she was marriageable.

The men of Lau were never tattooed. According to an old tale, when the Tongans first visited Lau they were so pleased with the tattooed Lauan women that they resolved to introduce the custom into their own country so they sent a man back to Tonga with the message: "Tattoo the women but not the men." The messenger repeated his message over and over until when he arrived in Tonga he was saying: "Tattoo the men and not the women," and this explains why in Tonga the men and not the women are tattooed.

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part in all its activities. Tchosaia, who no longer did any physical work, spent much of his time in my house chatting over the kava bowl. He was a man with "mana", feared and respected on the island. He had a keen and independent mind, a sense of humor, and a naturally dignified chiefly manner. In a matter involving precedence he was always accorded highest rank.

As a young man, Tchosaia spent much time traveling, both in Fiji and in Tonga and living at the high chief's court at Lakemba. He learned to speak the Mbauan and the Tongan languages. According to the old ceremony for preparing kava, the kava root was chewed by noble youths before being placed in the kava bowl and mixed with water. Kava chewing has been forbidden, and today the root is either pounded on a stone slab with a stone hammer or crushed in a wooden mortar with an iron pestle. Formerly Tchosaia was one of the noble youths who chewed kava for the high chief. When we knew him he still had a perfect set of strong white teeth which he attributed to kava chewing. At Lakemba he learned the complicated court etiquette and court phraseology used only when addressing the high chief and nobles of highest rank in Lakemba. Instead of the ordinary words, extravagantly flattering or descriptive metaphors are used for the parts of the body, the actions, and the relationships of nobles. For instance, a chief's eye is called "brightness", his ear "bird's wing", his body "ivory skin", and head "place above". A chief's house, always centrally located, is the "center of the town". When a chief speaks he "makes sound", when he dies he "falls" or "sleeps".[20]

Tchosaia's experience and training at the chief's court set him apart from the other Kambarans, who considered him the best authority on olden times, on the traditions and customs of the nobles, and on Lauan folklore. He knew from memory

[20] A. M. Hocart, "The Lau Islands, Fiji," Bishop Museum, Bulletin 62, Honolulu, 1929, pp. 47-48.

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797 Deity. The old mythology and much of the folklore was suppressed. The Bible was translated into the Mbauan dialect, which was reduced to written form and later became the official language of Fiji. A death struggle was waged against the native priesthood, temples, warfare, cannibalism, human sacrifice, and polygamy.

For at least fifteen years the natives resisted the new religion. Finally, however, with the gradual infiltration of western trade articles such as gunpowder, fire arms, and metal tools, the strong native opposition broke down. As soon as the chiefs were convinced by these material objects that the white man's God had more powerful "mana" than their own gods, they accepted the white man's religion.

Once embraced by the chiefs, the gospel spread quickly throughout the group. It was carried into the isolated parts of Fiji like southern Lau by native converts. Mission churches, built in the style of native houses, were established on each island, and native missionaries, trained at mission centers like Lakemba, were put in charge of them. The nobles became pillars of the Church. In the Christianized communities Sunday was introduced as a day of rest and rites. On this day Church services consisting of prayers and responsive readings, a sermon and hymns (translated into Mbauan and accompanied by westernized Tongan music), followed by a native feast, were held. Modified Christian rites were added to the old native ceremonies which marked birth, marriage, and death. The drinking of kava was forbidden, but inasmuch as ceremonial kava drinking along with dancing and the exchange of property marked all important occasions in Lau, the custom was not stamped out. On the contrary, whereas formerly kava was drunk only by men of high rank, now men and women of all classes partake of the beverage.

554 177 The native religion was so closely integrated with the rest of life that a radical change in it affected the whole culture. Complete suppression of warfare in the group had reverbera-

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123 574 431 not well be refused, and might mean the cementing of an alliance, or the request for a wife, or the sacking of a rival town. Nowadays the presentation of them is purely a matter of ceremony. This part of the performance was called the *Qalovi*, and should properly have taken place while we were still on the water, the islanders swimming out to us carrying the *tabua*, but this is now seldom done.] Our *matapuli* took them up in token of acceptance and gazed at them for a moment in deep admiration, as etiquette demanded, and then made another short set speech, repeating his (or, rather, our) wishes that all should be well with the land.

After this two men staggered in bearing an enormous multi-branching root of green *Yaqona*[1] which they placed at our feet. Our *matapuli* [201] here did the *vaka cobo*, or clapping of the hollowed hands cross-ways, as is always done where *Yaqona* 123 574 is concerned, and told the men to prepare a bowl of the drink from it.

● 272 At this point the torches were extinguished, lanterns suspended from the trees, and the parallel lines of men automatically grouped themselves in a half-circle facing us, while an enormous round polished bowl, made of a single section of the *Vesi* tree, and decorated with hanging clusters

[1] Known as Kava or Hava in other parts of the Pacific; and with the drinking of which all important ceremonies must inevitably be connected.

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of large white cowry shells, was brought into the ring. Two or three handsome young men, of magnificent physique—"the *Yaqona* mixers"—then gathered round this, and the ceremony started. A fathom of cowry-strung sinnet hanging over from one portion of the rim was carefully set out so as to point directly at us; and then started the rhythmical pounding in a hollow wooden cylinder of chopped off sections of the root. (The drink was formerly made in Tonga by adding water to chewed contributions from each member of the party, and the Tongans introduced the practice into Lau and thence to Fiji. But in course of years pounding was substituted in Tonga, and the Tongans then thought it a disgusting thing that Fijians should chew! Chewing has now been put down by law in Fiji on hygienic grounds, and is only surreptitiously carried on in certain mountainous districts.)

When the powdered fragments shot into the big bowl were considered sufficient the bowl was tilted towards us to exhibit them, and our *matapuli* then gave the order "*Lose.*"[1] Water was then poured in from several *Pupu*,[2] and some old men started, in the high-pitched, quavering notes that are always used for this, the ancient *Yaqona* song or *méké*, the words of which they themselves hardly know the meaning of.

[1] Wring it out or mix it.

[2] Lauan word for hollowed entire coco-nut shells suspended in woven nets of sinnet.

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hardly know the meaning of. After a little while, the mixture having attained a sufficiently fluid state, the old leader of the *méké* called out "*Livi wai se?*" (Shall water continue to be poured or not?); but, apparently, no answer was expected, this being a set phrase signifying that there was enough. *Mai lose* (the wringer), then took up his duties with a thick hank of lace-like, but strong, *vau* bark fibres; and, sweeping the liquid with circular movements, gathered up in the meshwork the solid particles of *Yaqona*, leaving the turbid brown fluid comparatively clear. This sweeping process was gone through many times, the *vau* being wrung out until the last drop of fluid had been expressed from it, and the fibres twisted until the muscles of the man's arms looked ready to crack, the dry residue being shaken out over a mat at the side. When at last even this expert was satisfied he called out, "It is clear," and our *matapuli* responded, "*Tu mai*,"[1] at which two young men, decorated with coloured leaves round their arms and legs, started to carry round the drink in polished half-coco-nut shells.

The *Talai* drank his off and then sent back the empty cup along the mats in a spinning fashion, as is the custom, and I did the same; deep-toned words of "*Maca, ah, maca*,"[2] fol-

[1] "Let them arise and approach."
[2] "It is empty" (he has drunk).

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lowed by a measured clapping of hands, greeting this action.

So also when any of the other higher chiefs subsequently drank, the same *maca* and hand clapping followed. The order of precedence was very strictly observed, and he who had poured the water called out, with a peculiar wailing cry, as each cup was filled, "*Kava kuo heka*,"[1] at which the *matapuli* called out the name of some one present. That individual thereupon clapped his hands once, to draw the attention of the cup-bearer to him, and the cup was presented. In Lau they have now adopted the Fijian order of precedence, and the biggest chief takes the first drink. But in Tonga the chief drinks third, his *matapuli* and one other drinking before him, possibly to safeguard against poison.

[201]

And so ended this very impressive ceremony, a relic of Lau in the olden days, and but seldom performed now. And never before or since, in the many years I have spent in the Lau Islands, have I seen it performed among the fantastic shadows and flickering lights from a living lane of torch-bearers.

[1] Literally, "The Kava is lifted"; in other words, "Who is to have this?"